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643 Curiously enough, many of the Djukas believe that there will be another war with the white man. To them it seems that the bahkra may attempt to re-enslave them at any time. Hence, they are suspicious of all white men, whom they expect soon to be fighting again. It is said that, in preparation for this eventuality, they have accumulated tremendous stores of *nekku* to poison the entire Surinam River, on which Paramaribo is located. The purpose of this, as they express it, is "*Fu killee ala bahkra na futu*"—"To kill all the white men at the foot (of the river)." Apparently they do not know that this plan is useless, that the water supply of Paramaribo does not come from the river, but from artesian wells and cisterns of rainwater.

Legally the Djukas are under the control of the Dutch Colonial Secretary, as wards of the Government of Surinam. The Bush Negroes recognize rather vaguely that the Dutch
• [53] own the colony, but while they are subjects they pay no taxes, have free range of nearly the entire area, and do exactly as they please concerning village and tribal affairs. The sovereignty of the Dutch is, for all practical purposes, merely nominal.

The Dutch make very humane colonists. In Surinam they are faced with the difficult business of governing a polyglot population of many races, Negroes wild and tame, aboriginal Indians, Hindus, Mohammedans from India, Javanese, Chinese, and white men of all nationalities. As Anatole France expressed it in *The Procurator of Judea*, putting the words in the mouth of Pontius Pilate, "It is no easy matter to

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govern a subject race with justice, and not interfere with their local customs." Here the Dutch have been marvellously successful. They seem to have a knack of understanding the primitive mind, so that under their rule the various races live in harmony—a wonder in itself—and peace reigns throughout the settlement.

Dutch Guiana does not have the atmosphere of tenseness that characterizes the British colony to the west or the penal colony to the east. On the whole a lovelier tropical settlement would be hard to find.

Unlike certain nations in Africa, the Dutch have never tried to exploit the natives by imposing anything like the infamous hut-tax. For this they certainly deserve high praise. The notable position of the Bush Negroes consists in this, that, whereas all over the world primitive tribes are paying tribute to the power of white exploiters, here is one tribe where the situation is reversed, and the whites are paying tribute to them.